

## 'Don't Do. Delegate'

### ■ Delegation

Delegation means getting things done, or achieving goals, through the efforts of other people. It is the major skill of management, whether you are managing an office, a business or a home. It means giving people authority to do interesting things, not just passing on all the unpleasant jobs to somebody else.

The underlying principle is that any advancement or progress depends on producing results beyond our own capabilities – we will never make progress if we have to do everything ourselves. Lack of the ability to delegate means holding on to the idea, 'I'll do it all myself'. This often leads to the person feeling under pressure, working longer hours, lacking time and feeling isolated. Poor delegation often means that others do not develop skills and there is poor team spirit.

### ■ Benefits of delegation

Delegation gives you:

- ① more time,
- ② increases your productivity,
- ③ frees you from the web of petty detail,
- ④ forces you to plan and organise,
- ⑤ increases your job satisfaction, and promotes variety,
- ⑥ helps others take on responsibility, develop initiative and learn new skills,
- ⑦ promotes team spirit.

### ■ Fears or obstacles stop people delegating

There are a number of reasons why people find it difficult to delegate. Most of these are underlying, often unrecognised, fears and insecurities.

**Guilt:** 'I can't ask Jane to do it she, she already has her hands full', 'I don't want to appear idle', 'I don't want to appear idle'.

**Fear of failure:** 'What if Pete really blows it – that will look bad for me.'

**Fear of success or envy:** 'What if he succeeds too well? They might think he is better at this job than me. I will feel redundant.'

**Fear of Letting Go:** The martyr syndrome. 'I'll do it myself and feel virtuous – nobody ever helps me', 'I can do it better myself', 'I want credit for the result.'

### ■ How to delegate effectively

#### ① Give clear instructions and information.

This does not mean telling the person exactly how to do something, but it does mean outlining what needs to be done, explaining why it needs doing, and setting standards and deadlines.

#### ② Pass on responsibility and authority.

Delegate the entire task to one person, not half a task. Provide the person with the resources to do the job and stay in contact and provide back up.

#### ③ Check if the person understands what is required.

Make sure that the person has adequate skills to carry out the task. Check also how they feel about doing the task.

#### ④ Monitor progress, arrange for regular updates.

Provide supervision and support, but do not keep looking over the person's shoulder. Praise in public; if you have to criticise, do so in private.

#### ⑤ Allow for as much autonomy or creativity as you can.

Give the person latitude to make decisions.

#### ⑥ Give feedback and praise.

When the task is completed go over it with the person, giving specific comments and praise, so that the person can learn from it.

### Possible causes and solutions of poor delegation

POSSIBLE CAUSES	IS IT ME?	POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS
What if she does it better than me? I will then be dispensable.		Be grateful. Nobody can be equally good at everything.
She already has too much to do. I do not want to overload her.		Have an overview of what are her priorities.
What if she fails? It will make me look bad.		Train her, pass on skills. Learn from mistakes.
I could do the job better myself.		Don't try to be a perfectionist; let things go.
I do not want to appear either as a tyrant or lazy.		Explain the reasons why you are delegating.
The other person might refuse.		You can ask and she can refuse.
I like doing the task. I prefer 'doing things' than 'managing'.		That's fine but what are the effects on your limited time.
It would be quicker to do it myself.		It might be in the short term – but consider the longer term.
I'll do it myself as usual. I can feel good, virtuous, martyrish.		Resentment can build up. You instill guilt in others

IDENTIFY CAUSES FOR YOUR POOR DELEGATION	IDENTIFY POSSIBLE CHALLENGES OR SOLUTIONS
<b>1</b>	
<b>2</b>	
<b>3</b>	
<b>4</b>	